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there is a discussion of the so-called group-genitive, seen in such an expression as "the queen of England's throne."

The third paper, "The Position of Words," illuminates many puzzling usages. The explanation here given of the much-discussed expression "It is me" (pp. 77-86) is the only complete and satisfactory one that is known to the present reviewer. The history of the idiom and a sound interpretation of it go hand in hand. The entirely legitimate indebtedness of this third paper to some parts of Jespersen's remarkable book, *Progress in Language*, might well have been more explicitly acknowledged.

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*A Short History of England's and America's Literature.* By EVA MARCH TAPPAN. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1906. Pp. 619.

*A Manual of American Literature.* By JAMES B. SMILEY. New York: American Book Co., 1905. Pp. 321.

*American Poems.* By AUGUSTUS WHITE LONG. New York: American Book Co., 1905. Pp. 368.

*Composition-Rhetoric.* By STRATTON D. BROOKS and MARIETTA HUBBARD. New York: American Book Co., 1905. Pp. 436.

Of the many inconsistencies in the teaching of English in the high school, none is plainer than that which is illustrated by at least two of the books named above. We surely have plenty of authority, from both the college and the school, for spending all the time possible in reading beautiful poetry and noble prose, rather than in studying long lists of short selections, or of summarized biographies. Yet year after year our best publishers keep on giving us such lists, which it is to be feared in some schools still stand between the pupil and the literature he should know. The point can not be made more plainly than it is made in Miss Tappan's book. In a short and convincing preface we are told that the book is based on the conviction that the principal object of studying literature is to learn to enjoy it, "that it is less important to know the list of an author's works than to feel the impulse to read one of them," and "that it is better to know a few authors well than to learn the names of many." Then why should we have a book which attempts to give a history of English literature in two hundred-fifty-five pages, and a history of American literature in three hundred-sixty-four, devoting for example, forty-four pages to the nineteenth century, with names in profusion? Mr. Smiley's book goes somewhat further back in type, consisting of little biographies, each followed by its inch of "estimate," sometimes from a very strangely selected critic, and consequently often unsatisfactory. The *American Poems* is a convenient book to have, either "on the drawing-room table a few days at Christmas," where the author does not wish it to be, or in the school library. It would be useless to discuss the relative space given to different writers; the book contains in general the poems one is apt to wish to find.

The *Composition-Rhetoric* is an interesting illustration of a prevalent tendency to get into print the methods of successful teaching rather than instruction for the pupil. In this book there is much that is good. The emphasis placed upon the superiority of theme-subjects which draw upon the pupil's own experience and opinion

is commendable, the assignments given are generally good, though not new, and the course indicated should prove interesting. Of the first serious fault we have warning in the preface, which says that "the logical arrangement of material should be subordinated to the needs of the pupils." That may be true, if it can be proved that the pupils will profit most by an illogical arrangement. The summary at the end of the third chapter will show how hard it must be for the pupil to know what he is learning, or what he is learning about, at any particular time. In this chapter are discussed image-making, figures of speech, the use of words, sentence-writing, paragraphing, and theme-outlines, all slightly, and without distinguishing clearly, either subjects or principles. And neither in this chapter nor elsewhere is there an adequate treatment of the paragraph, of the sentence, or of diction. It is true that the amount of technical information given should be small, and that it should be given concretely as good advice about the pupil's writing. But the assumption of the preface that rhetorical theory is taught for the sake of the recitation can not be taken seriously. The simple and obvious laws of the different units of composition are worth knowing, and young people show a preference for definite statements. The fundamental weakness of the book is this: it does not give with clearness or force the definite instruction that boys and girls in the high school desire and need.

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*The Language Readers.* (Grades I-VI.) Six volumes. By FRANKLIN J. BAKER and GEORGE R. CARPENTER. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1906.

This series of Readers aims to give within the compass of one book for each of the first six years of school all that the children and the teacher need for the study of all the language arts and sciences—literature, language including formal grammar and rhetoric, composition oral and written, spelling, and reading. The authors and compilers suggest two arguments by way of defending the plan: (a) "economy of time and money;" (b) "efficiency in instruction." Of course it is a canny thought, that of all the material for all these disciplines within one book, and one can readily grant the economy of money; the other items of the two arguments are not to be so lightly assumed, because they are precisely the point and they need further defense.

The selections are made and graded with great taste and judgment, with the exception of a bare half-dozen bits for example, "I remember, I remember," and "Break, break, break," both of which are the purest pathetic fallacies for persons under eleven. With the smallest number of such exceptions, the selections are all things that one desires every child to know—though this is not saying that they are all that one desires his child to know of the literary kind.

The compilers seem quite aware of the danger of fragments; yet there are many bits in the books that, taken out of larger wholes, have the effect of unrelated episodes. Such are the bit out of *Emmy Lou*, all the incidents out of *The Odyssey*, *Robinson Crusoe*, and other longer classics. As a matter of fact every book of selections has the effect of a collection of fragments, and to make such a book the only basis of a child's year in literature is to miss one of the most desirable of literary results—the